

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
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2003

PP Activities Resulting from Events in GUATEMALA

Outline of Recommendations

I. Immediate action to be taken in Guatemala:

1. Obtain all useful evidence re:

a. Communist activities, especially Communist influence control in government, labor unions, peasants unions, etc.

b. Atrocities, including murder of anti-Communists by police agents, torturing of prisoners (Salama), inhumane methods of expelling political "undesirables" (putting them sick and penniless across a border), looting of houses of political prisoners and exiles, etc.

c. Guatemalan interference in the affairs of other countries, especially Honduras, Salvador and Nicaragua, using the Guatemalan diplomatic services for the clandestine infiltration of Communist propaganda, financing strikes, etc., possibly also role in plot to assassinate President Somoza.

2. Such evidence may be obtained through:

a. Documentary evidence to be found in government offices (Presidency, Foreign Ministry, Police HQ), in political offices, HQ of the four government parties, especially the Communist Party, PGT; and of the Communist-controlled organizations, especially the Labor Union Federation (CGTG) and the Farmers Federation (CNCG), and in the homes of Communist leaders, government officials, etc.

b. Interrogation of knowledgeable witnesses, both friendly (e.g. victims of police brutality, leaders of non-Communist groups etc.) and unfriendly (officials of the Arbenz regime, Communist officials).

Some of this evidence, especially concerning Guatemalan activities abroad, may also be obtained in adjoining countries, especially in Honduras (fomenting of strikes, printing of a clandestine Communist newspapers, several Guat consuls declared non grata because of interference with internal affairs) and in Nicaragua (part in assassination plot, possibly also propaganda).

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II. Action depending upon steps to be taken by the new Guat Government:

1. It is essential that the first declarations and measures of the new government should help to refute Communist and other hostile propaganda, especially with regard to the following points:

a. The new regime endorses Agrarian Reform, too, only minus the Communist coloring. There should perhaps be a government investigation of the past performance of the agrarian reform program, especially of the activities of the Communist-Dominated Department of Agriculture, to prove that this past performance was (a) misused for Communist purposes, (b) not conducted in the best interest of the peasants and farm workers.

b. The new regime is not at the service of foreign monopolies, especially of the United Fruit Company. (It might submit UFCO claims to international arbitration, before the World Court, or any other suitable body.)

c. The new regime is not anti-labor. It will remove Communist control from the labor unions, but not destroy basic labor rights. This might be demonstrated by calling in a delegation from the ICFTU or the ORIT which could confirm past Communist misuse of the Labor Unions, perhaps through public hearings.

(NOTE: Castillo Armas, in an interview a few days ago, was quoted as stating that he was to forbid any central union federation and to permit only separate unions. This attitude is likely to bring him immediately into conflict with the international labor movement and to confirm the accusations of non-Communist liberal media which branded his movement from the beginning as "reactionary.")

2. The new regime ought to take steps to document its case properly not only for the benefit of the people of Guatemala, but for international public opinion as well. Such steps might include:

a. Publication of a White Book, justifying the overthrow of the Arbenz regime along the lines of p. 1 above, documenting the domestic character of the uprising etc.

b. Presentation of its case before the U.N. and/or the O.A.S.

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c. Public trials of persons responsible for the conditions under the Arbenz regime, especially for atrocities, misuse of government offices and government funds for Communist purposes (it seems, for instance, that various trips of Communist leaders behind the Iron Curtain were financed from government funds; the output of official government propaganda followed also strictly the CP line).

III. International Action.

1. Eyewitnesses of Communist atrocities, of the Communist character of the Arbenz regime etc. (for instance, survivors of Salama, non-Communist labor union officials) should go on lecture tours with the maximum possible publicity; throughout Latin America, this might be organized through Summit, for Europe and perhaps some Asian countries through QKOPERA.

2. Appropriate international organizations should be invited:

a. To send delegations to Guatemala to convince themselves (and their international membership) of the true facts.

b. To assist in the democratic reconstruction of the country.

Such organizations might include the ICFTU, the International Peasants Union, the National Committee Free Asia (?), etc.

3. A prominent writer from a neutral country -- either from a major Latin American country, or perhaps even better from an "under-developed" country elsewhere, such as India, Indonesia or the Philippines -- should be induced to visit Guatemala, to make a personal study of the situation and of its background and to write a well-documented and illustrated book "The Case of Guatemala" which would then be given the widest possible distribution on a world-wide scale. This book should especially emphasize the lessons which other undeveloped countries may derive from the experience of Guatemala with international Communism.

N O T E:

Above recommendations should be understood to be in addition to the obvious routine measures required in this situation, such as:

a. Providing adequate guidance and background material for all PP outlets not only in Latin America, but in all interested parts of the world (which ought to include particularly Asia,

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the Middle East and predominantly agrarian European countries, such as Italy and perhaps Greece and Spain).

b. Planning to combat the expected revival of the Guat Communist Party, whether underground inside the country or in exile.

c. Examining the capabilities of the world-wide Communist propaganda apparatus (especially in the Western Hemisphere), as it performed throughout the Guatemalan cases and deciding upon measures of weakening, if not destroying this apparatus or at least of counter-balancing it with more effective PP assets of our own.

d. Analyzing our own PP operations in the case for the purpose of deriving useful operational lessons for future cases of a similar nature.

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2 July 1954

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